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Thoughts for the New Year.

By Rev. E RATTENBURY HODGES.

We enter another year of this new century, ardently hoping that it holds in its bosom that peace, of which the world has been so long deprived. "Let us start up and live. Here come the moments that cannot be had again ; some few may yet be filled with imperishable good," says James Martineau, that philosopher and preacher of undying fame. Here, in simple language, is offered most important advice. Many persons never care to "start up" but are content with a low place in the scale of being. A great multitude are, seemingly, content to dwell almost on the animal plane. The chief concern of millions in our land is to feed and care for their bodies, while the mind is left to starve. Such persons have no real sense of the value of knowledge.

The age in which we live, is fullest of any in intellectual activity. In all past centuries, the conquests of science were never so great and wonderful as those which the 19th Century has bequeathed to the rising generation. Some of nature's choicest secrets have been wrung from her, and long lost histories have been literally dug up, so that Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Hittite, speak from the grave of ages. Moreover, such discoveries have illuminated the Old Testament to a degree never imagined, and settled many hitherto insoluble problems. And yet millions of persons only get in the daily press, a passing glimpse of these records of research. Tens of thousands in this England of ours hardly ever read a book, and when they do, it is almost sure to be a trashy novel. Why is this? It is said that multitudes are too tired with daily toil to search for knowledge after they have left shop and factory, field and mine. There was and still is, some truth in the objection ; but the hours of labour have now been much reduced, and even before that, men found time for field sports of various kinds. The plea, we are too tired to seek knowledge. must be set aside. There is another reason. A vast proportion of persons are not aware of the mind's immortal powers, and therefore cherish no high ideal of life. As a natural consequence they have no thought of rising above the common level of mankind. It is only here and there that one so rises, with courage, hope and resolution. "We claim," says Sir F. G. Kenyon, "no exclusive superiority, but England stands, in the vital struggle in which we are now engaged, not only for honour and good faith, but also for a high ideal of spiritual and intellectual culture."

Moreover, Alexander M. Thompson reminds us that "only three things degrade the courage of a people—falsehood, indolence, and lack of ideal—and these three are the most obvious symptoms of politics."

Let us start up and live anew. Some more than others, need courage to face difficulties. They naturally prefer an easy path to hard climbing. They would learn a subject in twelve lessons, or find one among the many convenient "short cuts" and then try it. The result often is disappointment.

Begin to be bold and venture to be wise :
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay
Till the whole stream that stopp'd him, shall be gone,
Which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on. —(Cowley).

Well, that is a warning. Let us start up and live, for "deeds are the pulse of Time, his beating life." We must do our part to widen our vision and deepen our sympathies. Labour brings its own reward ; there is the sweet consciousness of having done something for the good of others, as well as for self, the sense that life is worth living when we work systematically and cheerfully. Let Hope sing her syren song within the breast.

Notes and News.

We Wish a Brighter New Year to Everybody!

"The Unitarian Monthly" appears with a new face and with various new arrangements of contents. Another design prepared for the front page was not ready in time for this issue, but it will be used for the February number.

It is intended to make the Magazine of greater use to our District Associations. It is probable that Associate Editors representing these bodies and other denominational organisations may assist the Editor in future arrangements.

An excellent letter to "Brethren in the Great War", has been issued from Essex Hall, and sent to our Unitarian men in the forces, and signed by Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; and a unique booklet of readings, prayers, and hymns with it.

ESSEX HALL, Essex Street, Strand, London, is the central meeting place and headquarters of the Unitarian denomination. The Hall is also let for public meetings ;and it has thus become a well-known centre for gatherings of men and women interested in very varied schemes for the amelioration and enlightenment of mankind. At the close of the year 1916, arrangements were in progress for utilising two rooms at Essex Hall as a Social Centre for Soldiers and Sailors. Early in the New Year, an adjoining house, now No. 1, Essex Street, will be converted into a Rest Room and Hostel for men on active service. After the War, it is intended to make use of the building for young men connected with our churches at home and abroad. In commemoration of the great generosity of several members of the Lawrence family in securing Essex Hall originally, and in recognition of the gift of £2,000 by Lady Durning-Lawrence on the present occasion, the committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association have decided to name the additional building "Lawrence House."

In commending the Social Centre Scheme to the Unitarian public, the Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association did not ask others to give without first setting a good example themselves. On looking over the list of donations, we observe that the sum of £1,422 14s. 0d. was contributed by the officers and committee of the Association. We doubt whether in the whole history of the denomination so large a sum was raised so quickly, so quietly, and so inexpensively. At the monthly meeting of the committee held on November 8th, the scheme was explained and very cordially endorsed; at the following meeting held on December 13th, it was announced that the £6,000 asked for had been promised. To the President of the Association, Dr. Carpenter, and to the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Fund, Mr. R. M. Montgomery, K.C., the sincere gratitude of Unitarians everywhere is richly due. The Social Centre will add a fine humanitarian element to the important work already carried on at Essex Hall on behalf of the whole denomination.

A circular letter signed by Dr. Charles Hargrove, President of our National Conference of Churches, and by Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, President of the National Unitarian Temperance Association on the evil and waste of Alcoholism has been sent out to our ministers and members of our churches. The London District Unitarian Society has held a Conference with Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree as speaker on, "The Nationalisation of the Drink Traffic," and Mr. Joseph Owen, M.A., H.M. Inspector of Schools as speaker on "Educational Needs." A presentation has been made to the Rev. H. Austin on having completed 50 years' ministry at Cirencester. Mr. Percy J. Winser, who died recently at Knutsford, has left £500 to the Unitarian Home Missionary College. The 103rd Annual Meeting of the Scottish Unitarian Association has been held when good progress was reported. The Autumnal Meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in South Wales were well attended and enthusiastic. At Mossley, Alderman J. E. Rhodes, a prominent Unitarian, is the new Mayor. The Annual Meeting of the subscribers to the Unitarian Home Missionary College has been held when the report of academic work was excellent. The Rev. Leonard J. Hines, Congregationalist, of Burnley, has been granted a certificate for the Unitarian ministry; Messrs. C. E. Mercer, Kendal, and F. A. Bullock, Leigh, have qualified for full ministerial status. The late Sir W. B. Bowring, of Liverpool, has left £1,000 to Hope Street Church, Liverpool, also to Manchester College, Oxford, to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the Liverpool Domestic Mission, and the North End Domestic Mission, Liverpool, and to other public bodies. The Military Cross has been awarded to 2nd Lieut. L. N. Blake Odgers, youngest son of Dr. Blake Odgers. Lieutenant H. G. Holt, son of Rev. Peter Holt, of Astley, has been awarded the Military Cross. The 228th Anniversary has been held of our Nantwich Chapel, Dec. 10th. Sales of Work have realised—at Padiham, £159; Ilford, £66; Holbeck, £65; Colne, Cake and Apron Sale and Gold and Silver Tree, £61; Astley, £102; Wood Green, £142; Nelson, Cake and Apron, £9; Newport, I.W., Jumble Sale, £8.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Rev. John Ellis, of Stalybridge, on leave for three months Y.M.C.A. service in France; Rev. Charles Travers, of Bradford, Manchester, has entered upon the ministry of the Richmond Hill Church, Ashton-under-Lyne; Rev. J. Collins Odgers, B.A., will conclude his ministry at Ullet Road, Liverpool, next midsummer; Mr. A. H. Heale, of the Pioneer Preachers, London, is appointed pastor at Bradford, Manchester; Rev. Frederick Munford, B.A., of London, is appointed to the Heywood Church; Rev. Dr. G. S. Hitchcock has concluded his ministry at the Unitarian Church, Chatham; Rev. Charles Craddock has retired from the Ancient Chapel, Toxteth, Liverpool, and received present of £532.

For the Boys at the War.

Life in the Army, or in the Navy, is just what our soldiers or sailors make of it. If a young fellow joins the forces the experiences he has to face put him under a very severe test. If weak, he comes out of it much worse than he went in; if resolute and strong-willed against all uncleanness, he is the stronger and the better for it.

Just think what it means. When off duty—What shall be done in the leisure time? Some fellows find nothing better to do than to indulge in gambling and drinking and worse things that these lead to. Those who are inclined to such evil-doing soon find each other; those who set their faces firmly against these practices are not long in mutual discovery; "birds of a feather flock together."

"Do you have anything to do with gambling and drinking?" asked one new recruit of another. They were both strangers up to that moment. "No, I don't,"—was the reply.

"Then you are the one I am looking for,"—said the first. "I want a chum who will have nothing to do with such like."

The young fellow who goes from home either to the Army or Navy, and who has been actively connected with a Church and Sunday School, does honour to his home, his church, and his Sunday School if he firmly refuses to be wheedled away from the clean path of right. It is just there, in the rough and tumble of life as he finds it among soldiers or sailors, where the influences of home and church and Sunday School should be his greatest defence. He carries those influences with him. Shall he betray them or be loyal and true to his old associations? If he stands firm and keeps his faith, and character unsullied he is a noble representative of the home, the church, and school from which he has sprung.

How many young fellows who return from the war will come home as morally clean as they went? Perhaps many more than people usually suppose. Surely the influences under which they have been reared count for something in life's struggle. Are there not many young men in the midst of every temptation who are resolutely keeping themselves pure? All honour to such! Blessed are they who refuse to defile or be defiled! What a grand thing to feel when they come home, that they can look mother and sweetheart and minister in the face, and say that they are as pure as when they went.

Ought we not to write letters to our boys as frequently as possible encouraging them in the good fight of the Faith? Can we not do much to cheer them and to put good heart into them by our sympathy and active interest in their moral welfare? Let us do it.

DEATHS: Mr. E. B. Glasson, Plymouth, Nov. 20th, 76; Surgeon C. H. Gow, son of Rev. Henry Gow, killed in action, France, Nov. 13th, 25; Lieut. H. Fletcher Robinson, of Manchester, killed in action July 1st, 24; Miss J. Potter Ellis, Sidmouth, Nov. 23rd, 87; Mr. E. Wilkes Smith, London, Nov. 24th, 74; Mr. Wm. Dodgeon, Padiham, Nov. 23rd, 76; Mr. Anthony Wilkinson, Padiham, Nov. 21st, 67; Sarah Guildford, Nottingham, Nov. 25th, 81; Rev. Joseph Pollard, Belfast; Miss M. L. Potter, Manchester, Dec. 3rd; Rev. C. J. Sneath, Birmingham, Nov. 28th, 78; Mr. John Heywood, Nantwich, Nov. 25th, 76; Mrs. James Jackson, Northampton, Nov. 26th; Mrs. W. H. Shephard, Rotherham, Nov. 27th, 56; Mr. T. R. Johnson, of Liverpool, killed in action, Oct. 12th, 27; Prof. A. M. Worthington, C.B., F.R.S., Oxford, Dec. 5th, 64; Mr. John Bainbridge, Newcastle, 94; Mrs. Whitehead, widow of Rev. J. Thornely Whitehead, Hackney, Dec. 8th; Mr. J. E. R. Allen, Worcester, son of the late Rev. E. Allen, of Walmsley, Dec. 12th, 50; Mr. Alderman Robert Elliott, Low Fell, 76; Mr. John Vallance, Ealing Common, Dec. 17th, 95.

Ours Among the Rest.

Among the millions at the War,
In khaki or in blue,
From cot to throne we love Our Own,
And Ours, dear Lad, are you.

If you forget us, now and then,
As in the stress you may,
The folks at Home can ne'er forget
Their Own, so far away.

Oh, for a wand to bring again
The feasts we now recall,
With many a laugh, and many a song,
And true love, best of all!

Dear Lad, be gay, though far away,
Still gallant, true and bold,
And make us Home-folks prouder yet
Than in the days of old.

And when (please God) the War is won,
And freedom's Peace shall come,
We'll sing the songs of Auld Lang Syne
With you, at Home, Sweet Home!

Christmas, 1916. W. G. Tarrant.

From the Business End.

BY A MELIORIST.

I.—"WILLIAM WALLIS WAKES UP."

William Wallis was worried. He was the secretary of Bardsley Street Unitarian Church, and on his way home from Sunday evening service had felt some irritation as he pushed his way through the crowds of worshippers that poured out of the Baptist, the Wesleyan, and the Anglican churches. His annoyance, however, was not with the "orthodox" multitudes, but with the handful of heretics connected with his own place of worship. And to Ben Wilson, a committeeman, and Henry Johnson, a member of the choir, who usually accompanied him home on Sunday nights for a friendly chat, he opened his mind.

When the friends were settled at the fireside, Wallis let himself go:

"For the life of me I can't understand our folk," he said suddenly.

Taken by surprise, the others turned eyes of enquiry towards him.

"Did you count the congregation to-night?"

Wilson hadn't thought of it, nor had Johnson; but they were agreed that the attendance was much as usual.

"Well, I did count, and there were nine men, thirty-five women, and half-a-dozen youngsters—one short of fifty—and there are sittings for three hundred."

His tone was slightly bitter, and his face betrayed the dissatisfaction he felt. Next to his home, "Bardsley Street" was to William Wallis the dearest spot in the world, and it distressed him that there was not more life about the place. Not that there had ever been much. From childhood he had been connected with the church, and it had always been thinly attended. Lately, however, it had been forced upon him that there ought to be fewer empty benches, and the sight of the crowds coming out of the other churches served to deepen the impression.

"Let's see," said Wilson presently, "how many members are there on the register?"

"A hundred and forty-eight," answered Wallis with emphasis, "about three times as many as we had to-night. Really, I cannot imagine what our people are thinking about."

"It's not at all satisfactory," was Johnson's judgment.

"And it's so hard on the minister," added Wallis, softening. "How he keeps so fresh and hopeful I can't tell. It would break my heart."

"I'm afraid his is not far from the breaking point sometimes, if only we knew," said Wilson.

"I believe there is something in what you say," added Johnson. "Did you notice him when he came into the pulpit to-night?"

For answer the others shook their heads.

"I did," said Johnson thoughtfully, "and I shall not soon forget it. He glanced over the congregation, and a look of pain crossed his face. It disappeared as quickly as it came, but it was there right enough."

"Poor fellow!" said Wilson feelingly.

"Poor fellow?" broke in Wallis. "He's a brick, and deserves far more support than he gets."

"You're right there, Wallis, he does," Johnson warmly agreed.

"And to think how keen the folk were to get him, and how well they attended at first," added Wallis with some warmth.

"I remarked it at the time, but I was afraid it wouldn't last," said Wilson.

"It didn't last!" Johnson said.

"And why? I should like to know," questioned Wallis. "It was no fault of Mr. Benson's."

"I don't know why, unless the novelty wore off as we got to know him better." Wilson suggested.

"Your suggestion is significant, and it's a disgrace to us. We are like a pack of children who need something fresh all the time to keep them interested," said Wallis impatiently.

For a minute or two the three sat in silence. Then Wallis spoke again.

"Now, if Mr. Benson were dull, or tactless, or incapable," said the loyal secretary, "we might excuse ourselves, but he isn't. Indeed, if we kept our side of the bargain as ably and as honourably as he keeps his, things at Bardsley Street would go with a swing."

"No doubt of that," responded Wilson.

"You recollect the welcome party, don't you?" Wallis asked.

"Shall I ever forget it?" said Wilson. "It was a great time."

"It was, and what a reception we gave him! And how we all promised to attend the services, as, of course, it is our duty to do. But how do most of us do it? We insult him by stopping away. Why, it's almost like telling him he isn't worth listening to."

"It isn't business, that's plain," remarked Johnson.

"But I don't think the folk are really wanting in respect for Mr. Benson," put in Wilson. "In fact, leaving out two or three who get on with nobody, I believe they are fond of him. They are simply thoughtless, and don't realise their obligations."

"All that is true enough," Wallis said, "but Johnson hit the mark when he said it wasn't business. It isn't, and we on the committee are more than a bit to blame."

"Why the committee?" asked Wilson in astonishment.

"Because there's a business end of this matter for which we, and not the minister, are responsible, and we very largely ignore it."

"It's true we're a bit slack about things," admitted Wilson, "but what is the particular point you are thinking of?"

Putting his hand to the newspaper rack, Wallis drew forth a religious weekly. "Here's a review of Campbell's latest book," he said. "Listen to this. 'One early passage about Nonconformist laymen expecting their ministers to make the church go as they make their business go, may provoke resentment.' Now, whether the folk referred to resent the passage or not, I am convinced that Campbell has put his finger on the secret of our failure to secure better congregations."

"How so?" Wilson asked.

"Because we have never quite understood what it was we really wanted. We expect good sermons from our ministers, and we look to them to conduct the services so that we shall feel better for taking part in them; isn't that so?"

Wilson acknowledged it was so, and Johnson said Mr. Benson seldom, if ever, failed them.

"The blunder we make," Wallis went on, "is in expecting the minister to do our work as well as his own. In plain English, we expect him to be our leader and teacher in religious matters, and a sort of business manager as well, only, if he tries to manage us, some of us kick over the traces and make things unpleasant for him and everybody else."

"It certainly looks as though we wanted it both ways, but were unwilling to have it either way," said Johnson.

"Exactly!" said Wallis with conviction. "And to make things worse, we have a fool like Dickson grousing about the place going to the dogs and insinuating that the minister is to blame."

"Such an expert in good manners should write a book on 'How to behave!' remarked Johnson sarcastically.

"Fortunately, everybody knows his weakness for finding fault," pleaded Wilson, "so he does Mr. Benson no harm."

"Unfortunately," urged Wallis, "what Dickson says in words the majority of us in some degree silently assume. Most unjustly, as I think, we have a way of connecting the success or the failure, especially the failure, of churches with ministers."

"I wouldn't be a parson for a fortune," said Johnson.

"Nor I," added Wilson. "I should say it is about the most thankless job under the sun."

At this point John Baines was admitted. He was the oldest member of the congregation, and had called to see Wallis on some church business. Finding the three men flushed and excited, he enquired the cause.

"Ah, lads," he said, when the explanation had been given, "you are starting at the wrong end."

"If the business end is the wrong end," said Wallis, not unkindly, "then we are, Mr. Baines."

"A church," said the old gentleman, "is not a business establishment, but a religious centre, and it is the piety and character of the people associated with it rather than crowded services that matters."

"I agree with you, Mr. Baines," said Wilson, "and I doubt, after all, if Mr. Benson would really appreciate a congregation that was merely a crowd."

"Just so, Ben," said the good old man. "You see," he went on, "we Unitarians are not a church-going people; but I think we value our simple religion, and I am sure it has a great influence on our daily lives."

"That is all very well, and no doubt true," said Wallis, "but since we have a centre for worship and teaching ought we not to value that, especially when we have a minister like Mr. Benson, whom we expect to be in his place, whatever we do?"

"Yes, William; I see what you mean. And whilst we don't believe that God is confined to the four walls of 'Bardsley Street,' or that prayer is limited to the utterance of words, I think after all we should have some consideration for Mr. Benson. I hadn't thought of that."

"Then you agree with us," said Johnson, "that it would be better every way if our people could be induced to attend, say," this with a twinkle in his eye, "well, as often as you do, Mr. Baines."

"Now, Henry, my boy," said the veteran not exactly displeased by the clinching compliment, "you mustn't bring me in; I enjoy the services, having formed the habit early."

"That is precisely what we want all the others to do," said Johnson. "If only we could get them into the habit the enjoyment would follow, and our secretary here would be a happier man."

"Yes, and what matters more to me," said Wallis, "and Mr. Benson would be a happier man, too."

"An extremely important consideration," remarked Mr. Baines. "Dear me," he added, "what a lot we take for granted! Mr. Benson is such a splendid fellow, invariably cheerful, so energetic, brimming over with ideas, and so devoted to the cause, that it never entered my mind that he could be anything but happy in his good work."

"But what about Dickson?" asked Johnson.

"Poor Tom!" said Mr. Baines. "Yes, he was complaining that we are in a bad way; but, you know, I've known Tom since he was a lad, and he has always been something of a grumbler. And yet I think he means well. However, if you can get the people to attend, you will make him happier too. But how do you propose to do it?"

"Wallis has some idea of stirring up the committee," said Wilson, "but I suggest that he reserves it until next Sunday night. It's getting rather late."

"I was just thinking so myself," said Wallis. "Perhaps you'll join us, Mr. Baines," he added.

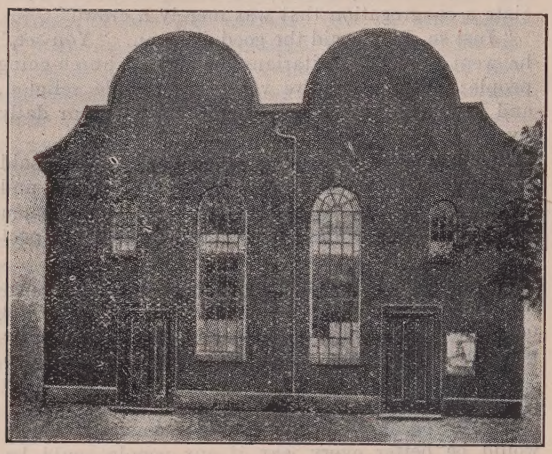
"I shall be delighted."

"It will be like old times," said Johnson, "when we were boys in your class."

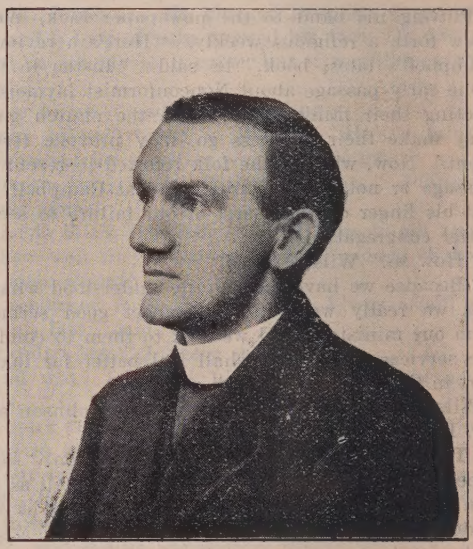
As he parted with his scholars at Wallis's door, the old teacher said: "Yes, the old times were good indeed, but let us hope there are better times coming."

The Old Presbyterian (Unitarian) Chapel,

NANTWICH.



Nantwich Chapel.



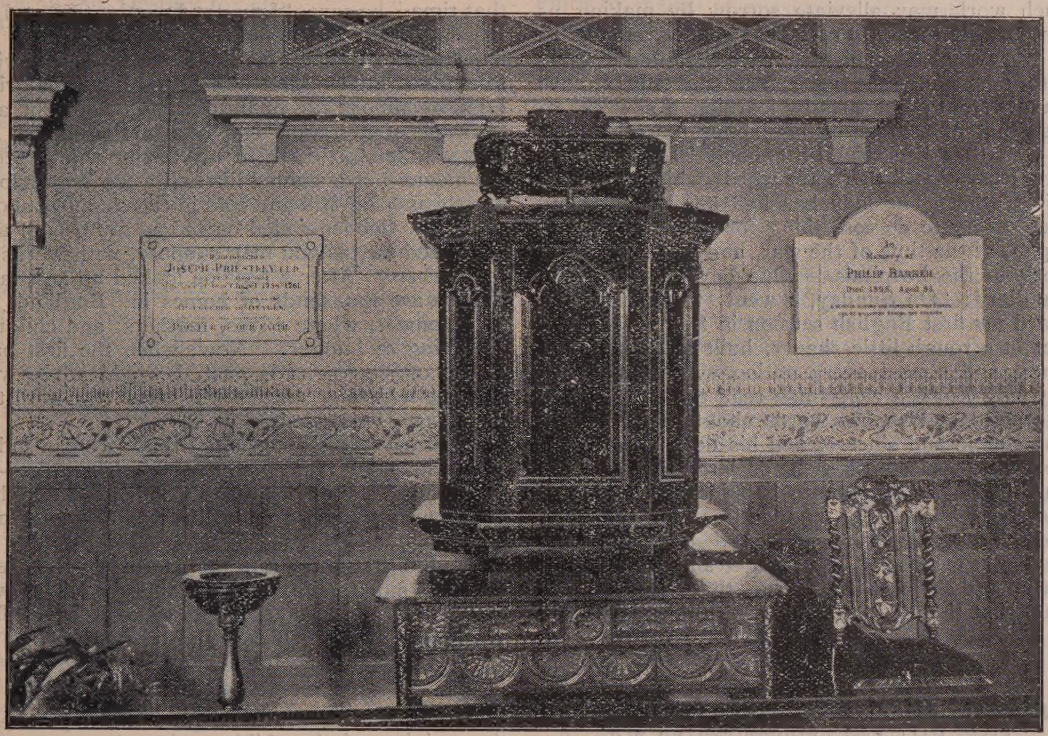
Rev. J. Park Davies.

The name though long is significant. As early as 1672 licence was granted to one Robert Fogg, who had been ejected from his living at Bangor Is-y-coed, in 1662, to be a Presbyterian teacher. He carried on the work in the homes of at least three friends. The Society which was thus formed had its first Meeting House in Pepper Street. The site is known but no trace of the building now remains. Philip and Matthew Henry were frequent visitors to the place. Here the latter preached his first (1686) and last (1714) sermons. He was on a visit to the town when, after a very brief illness, he passed away on June 22nd. The first settled pastor was Rev. William Turton, M.A., who had been ejected in 1662 from his living at Rowley in Staffordshire. His ministry at Nantwich began and ended in 1688. Since then there have been the following ministers: Samuel Lawrence, 1688-1712; Joseph Mottershead 1712-1718, Wm. Vawdrey 1719-28, Thomas Haynes 1729-45, Rd. Meanley 1745-58, Dr. Joseph Priestley 1758-61, John Houghton 1761-71, Rd. Hodgson 1771-99, Roger Madox 1800, — Partridge 1800-1, Wm. Johns 1801-3, Dd. Wm. Johns (Jones?) 1804-15, Francis Knowles 1816-23, Jas. Hawkes 1823-46, Francis Hornblower 1849-53, Thomas Bowring 1853-57, Rob. Wilkinson 1859-1861, Thos. Willicott 1862-64, E. W. Hopkinson 1864-68, James Macdonald 1869-73, T. B. Broadrick 1874-77, J. H. Matthews 1878-86, S. S. Brettell, M.A. 1887-8, Wm. Robinson 1889-90, S. S. Brettell, M.A. 1890-91, J. Morley Mills 1892-1900, E. A. Maley 1900-4, Dd. Davis 1905-7, W. A. Weatherall 1908-13. Since 1913, J. Park Davies, B.A,, B.D. In 1725 the congregation removed from Pepper Street to its present home in Hospital Street. Except for renovations carried out in 1849 in consequence of fall of roof the interior of the chapel is much the same as it always has been. The original pews remain. The pulpit and font are those which were in actual use in the days of Priestley and previously. The same cannot be said of the exterior. Since 1896, when a new wing was added to the schoolroom half of the old front is obscured.

It will be observed that on either side of the pulpit is a marble tablet. The one commemorates the three years' ministry of Dr. Priestley, Sept., 1758—Sept., 1761. Theologically the congregation took a decisive step forward about the year 1745. Hall, the historian of Nantwich, regards the place since that date as Unitarian. In addition to his pastoral work Priestley conducted a successful school in a room (no longer existing), which reached over the entrance to the chapel yard. It was here he began the scientific experiments which resulted later in the important discovery of oxygen. The school flourished for nearly a century. One of the last to be instructed in it—under James Hawkes—was Philip Barker,

in whose memory the other tablet was recently erected. The coming of the Barker family into the chapel—some 100 years ago—was an event of considerable importance. Philip is the best-known member, for it was he who, as last survivor, left a legacy to our chapel in Crewe, a generous endowment to the Nantwich Chapel, of which he was a faithful and active member and founded Willaston School, which was opened in 1900. By the last act it was his wish to help the whole denomination.

Though old, the chapel is yet full of youthful vigour. Most of our young men are in the army but thanks chiefly to the loyalty of the ladies, the religious services, Sunday School, Band of Hope, Choir and Women's Guild are carried on with efficiency and success.



Warmest congratulations to Rev. H. E. Dowson and Mrs. Dowson, on celebration of their golden wedding, and on his completion of 50 years at Gee Cross this month, and arrival at nearly 80 years of age. Ministers and Church Secretaries have sent to Essex Hall more than 24,000 names from Unitarian Rolls of Honour. Dr. Carpenter's circular from Essex Hall to the "Brethren in the Great War," says amongst other things that "the thoughts of your friends in Home and Church and School go out to you with deep sympathy in the terrific struggle. On behalf of those who share with you a common faith, I send you an earnest greeting of goodwill and hope. . . . Our Faith—urges us to uphold the fair fame of England, and to keep our religion unstained. . . Our best wishes go with you for your welfare."

Truth and Right.

I know that right is right;
  That it is not good to lie;
That love is better than spite,
  And a neighbour than a spy.
In the darkest night of the year,
  When the stars have all gone out,
That courage is better than fear,
  That faith is truer than doubt.
And fierce though the fiends may fight,
  And long though the angels hide,
I know that Truth and Right
  Have the universe on their side.

—Washington Gladden.

The Work that Heals all Sorrow.

By Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

We have been told countless times that the restoration of our lives from sorrow can be effected by work, by our plunging into busy occupation. It is broadly true. But it is untrue if the work determined upon is work to be done solely on our own account, with a view to our own peace only. Such work may alleviate sorrow by making us temporarily forgetful of it, but cannot remove it: in every slackening of energy we shall find it again before us and upon us. We can only remove sorrow from our hearts by learning a new suffering, that of self-sacrificing labour for others.

In that beautiful little book "The Lady of the Decoration," there are words which illustrate this truth. The lady has had her troubles and been trying to do something for others. She is in Japan, at the time of the war, and will soon go to work in the hospitals. One day she writes in her diary: "On Sunday, I went to church and heard my first English sermon in two years. We met in a rough little shanty, built in a cluster of pines, and almost every nation was represented. A young English clergyman read the service, and afterwards said a few words about sacrifice. He was simple and sincere, and his deep voice trembled with earnestness as he declared that sacrifice was the only true road to happiness, sacrifice of ourselves, our wishes and desires, for the good and the progress of others. And suddenly all the feeling in me got on a rampage, and I wanted to get up and say that it was true, that I knew it was true, that the most miserable, pitiful, smashed-up life could blossom again if it would only blossom for others."

The passage reminds me of an episode in the life of John Bright. He tells how, when at the age of thirty he lost his young and devoted wife, his friend Cobden came to comfort him. "At that time," he says, "I was at Leamington, and on the day when Mr. Cobden called on me—for he happened to be there at the same time on a visit to some relatives—and was in the depth of grief, I might almost say of despair, for the light and sunshine of my home had been extinguished. All that was left on earth of my young wife, except the memory of a sainted life and a too brief happiness, was lying still and cold in the chamber above us. Mr. Cobden called on me as my friend, and addressed me, as you may suppose, with words of condolence. After a time he looked up and said, "There are thousands of homes in England at this moment, where wives, mothers, and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first paroxysm of your grief is past, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest until the Corn Law is repealed."

We know the sequel, and I think we can judge of the inner joy that came to Bright's smashed-up life through the work he and Cobden did together for thousands whose daily life was one long privation and suffering.

The life that is spent in ministering to the needs of others most readily finds binding-up for its own brokenness and healing for its sorrows. Sacrifice is the sure means of peace and blessedness.

National Unitarian Temperance Association

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.

President: Rev. Dr. J. E. CARPENTER.
Hon. Treasurer: Mr. E. BUSER.
Hon. Sec.: Mr. E. F. COWLIN, 19, Northwood Road, Forest Hill, London.

When we say "A BAND OF HOPE IN EVERY CHURCH," we mean all the helpful influences in the Church itself that ensure its success, for Temperance is a religious question, and a Church is incomplete where a Temperance organisation is wanting as one of its activities. The religion of the early Christians included Temperance, the Apostle Paul frequently alludes to it, and it has come down to us with all the other constituent parts of Christianity. Its application is more extended, but it carries the principle in our Temperance (total-abstinence from intoxicating drinks). The helpful influences are the support of the pastor, the favour of the Church Committee, and the sympathy of the congregation. The day when the Band of Hope existed on sufferance must belong to the past, and never return. More than that, dealing with a religious matter, namely, the training of the children in the way they should go, it demands fullest recognition and encouragement. In aiming to establish a Band of Hope in every Church, we aim at securing at least a majority for Temperance in the Church. We expect the Minister to labour for the spread of Temperance in his church, it will make his work in the Band of Hope easier, if he has the parents of the children in entire sympathy with that branch of his work. In the Sunday School temperance teaching will not be an accident due to the announcement that a certain date in November is Temperance Sunday, it will come as part of the Gospel of God, along with love, joy, peace, kindness, etc.

When we say a Band of Hope in every Church, we mean a Society for making total-abstainers.

With the New Year let all Temperance workers be up and doing, with all the earnestness of which they are capable. R.N.

Unitarianism.

UNITARIANISM stands for—Free Inquiry in Religion; for the Unity of God in one only deity, the Universal Father; the Unity of Man in the Brotherhood of all mankind; the Unity of Jesus in one nature as a real man; the Unity of Truth, as all truth is one; the Unity of Life here and hereafter; the Unity of all Religious Faiths in the seeking after Righteousness; the Unity of Salvation in one Destiny for all.

According to W. E. CHANNING, D.D.:—

Unitarianism is a system most favourable to piety because it presents to the mind one, and only one Infinite Person to whom supreme homage is to be paid. It does not weaken the energy of religious sentiment by dividing it among various objects. It collects and concentrates the soul on one Father of unbounded, undivided, unrivalled glory. To Him it teaches the mind to rise through all things. Around Him it gathers all the splendours of the Universe. To Him it teaches us to ascribe whatever good we receive or behold. In the first place, we believe in the doctrine of God's UNITY, or that there is One God, and one only. To this truth we give infinite importance. . . We understand by it that there is one being, one mind, one person, one intelligent agent, and one only, to whom underived and infinite perfection and dominion belong.

. . . . .

We believe in the unity of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is one mind, one soul, one being, as truly one as we are, and equally distinct from the One God.

Our leading principle in interpreting Scripture is this, that the Bible is a book written for men, in the language of men, and that its meaning is to be sought in the same manner as that of other books.

. . . . .

Now all books and all conversation require in the reader or hearer the constant exercise of reason; or their true import is only to be obtained by continual comparison and inference. . . . We reason about the Bible precisely as civilians do about the constitution under which we live.

Unitarianism promotes piety because it is a rational religion. By this I do not mean that its truths can be fully comprehended; for there is not an object in nature or religion which has not innumerable connections and relations beyond our grasp of thought. I mean that its doctrines are consistent with one another and with all established truth. Unitarianism is in harmony with the great and clear principles of revelation; with the laws and powers of human nature; with the dictates of the moral sense; with the noblest instincts and highest aspirations of the soul; and with the lights which the universe throws on the character of its Author.

Our District Associations of Churches.

There are twenty District Associations of Unitarian Churches in England and Wales. Most of them have been founded since 1858; before that there was one established in 1850, two in 1845, and another before 1820.

But in several instances they were the successors of older societies, which distributed Unitarian tracts and promoted the spreading of the Faith by means of missionary preachers.

The objects of the existing associations are variously stated as the following:—

To promote the spread of liberal theology and the growth of the Christian life by establishing and nurturing congregations and Sunday schools.

The promotion of rational Christianity, and furtherance of spiritual life.

To help needy churches, establish new ones, extend influence of religious teaching and practical religion.

To found new congregations, to assist present congregations, and to engage in missionary work.

To help needy churches, to form new ones, to conduct religious services for the people, and other missionary efforts.

Promotion of Christianity in connection with the freedom which rejects subscription to any articles of theological belief.

For missionary effort in the district.

For conference and fellowship among a group of congregations which lie quite close together, and missionary work.

To unite the churches and schools in the district, and to extend their influence and increase their usefulness.

Promotion of the worship of God and the brotherly co-operation of its members.

To promote Unitarian Christianity.

The encouragement and support of constituent congregations, the promotion of missionary work, and the spread of the principles and faith of liberal religion.

The union and co-operation of the congregations for carrying on missionary work.

To help needy congregations and extend by missionary effort the influence of Unitarianism.

To assist weak churches and engage in missionary work.

To promote intercourse among the churches, to help weaker congregations, and to disseminate liberal religion.

To promote and extend Unitarian Christianity by rendering aid to existing churches, by establishing new ones, by interchange of pulpits, by conferences and other meetings among the associated congregations, and by missionary work.

From these statements it is evident that their aims are all very much alike, and it is plain that Unitarianism is a missionary faith.

An account of the doings of each association may follow in succeeding issues of this magazine.

A Talk to the Children.

My Dear Young Folks,—A Happy New Year to you all!

A little girl was eating her breakfast when the sunshine was on the table, and she suddenly exclaimed: "Mother, I've just swallowed a spoonful of sunshine."

God sent the sunshine to do many wonderful things, and one of them is that it shall brighten the way in which we walk, and make us all glad.

So it is a good thing to be in the sunshine, to "let the blessed sunshine in," and to get as much of it as we can, and when we have it, to share it with others.

Yes, that is it,—to share it with others. The way to be happy is,—to make others happy. God makes the sunshine, but He does not keep it to himself. He shares it with everybody.

And you can make sunshine too,—the sunshine of the heart If you are pleasant you make sunshine for those at home and for all the people you meet; indeed you carry sunshine about with you everywhere and share it with everybody.

The terrible war in which armies of men are fighting, casts dark shadows over thousands of homes and over millions of sad hearts. The war spirit spreads gloom everywhere. We all look eagerly for the dawn when there will be the sunrise of peace upon all lands and upon all people. It will be a happier world everywhere when war shall be no more. We look to you to be peacemakers and the makers of that happier time.

Of course, wrong must be resisted. We must always be at war against evil in ourselves and against evil around us. We must never cease to fight against temptation, and ignorance, and difficulty, and error. But warfare which means killing men and making many thousands of children fatherless can be avoided and ought to be.

What will bring that happier day quickly? Right thoughts about God and the human soul, about life, and duty and religion. These may be found in our Unitarian Faith. That cheers the heart, and shows the bright side; it is to all who have it,—the sunshine of life; it makes them happy, and gives them everything worth living for.

The world is beautiful, is it not? Think of the flowers, the birds, the trees, the blue sky, the hills, and the glens, and the running waters, and the great wide sea. Who made all these? We call their Maker—God. God made the children, and the men and women, fathers and mothers. He must be much better than all the best fathers and mothers He has made. He loves everybody, everywhere, always, for ever and ever. He desires all people to be good to each other and not to hurt one another. He makes the sun to shine on all alike, and wishes us all to keep in the sunshine and to make every year happy. Will you do your part?

—The Editor.

Some Short Stories.

CHARACTER THAT COUNTS.

A Greek Statesman was offered a large sum of money as a bribe to do something which he considered dishonourable.

Another, hearing of this, and not having the same sense of honour, said to the Statesman:

"Whatever made you refuse so much money? I should certainly have taken it if I had been you."

"Yes," answered the other, "and I should undoubtedly have taken it if I had been you."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Abraham Lincoln, when a boy, was serving in a shop. He sold a woman eight shillings worth of goods. He took her money and gave her change. When she had gone, he found that he had given her sixpence too little. It was evening time, so he locked up the shop, trudged two miles to where the woman lived, and gave it back to her. Right is right, and it was worth doing.

A GENEROUS BOY.

Two boys proved themselves the best swimmers in some races. So they had to swim a final for the prize. One of them requested that the race be put off for a quarter of an hour. The judge thought he would find out the reason. So he was told that the second boy was seized with cramp, and that his rival had been so generous as to ask for more time to enable him to get over it. The generous lad was found in a tent rubbing the other who had the cramp to make him more vigorous for the race.

A GENTLEMAN.

A Japanese Admiral was dining at the house of a lady, when he saw a caterpillar crawling among some salad which had been served to him. The hostess happened to be looking down the table at that moment, and she saw the creature too. She was horrified that such a thing should happen to one of her guests. But the Admiral deliberately took the caterpillar with some salad and swallowed it. Nothing was said, and no one noticed the incident, but afterwards when the hostess apologised to her guest, he said, "Do you think I was going to spoil your evening for the sake of a miserable caterpillar,"

National Conference Guilds' Union.

(This National Conference is of Unitarian and kindred Churches).

President: Rev. J. M. LLOYD THOMAS.
Gen. Sec.: Miss M. TWIST, 34, Harbury Road, Birmingham.
Topic List Sec.: Rev. MORTIMER ROWE, B.A.
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Monthly Message: DO NOT SURRENDER YOUR IDEALS.

It has been said that the real quality of men is revealed by their behaviour in times of crisis. In these momentous days idealists of all kinds are being tried and many, alas, are found wanting. Before the war, comfortable idealists were almost as plentiful as flowers in May. Life went very well then. For their own food, clothing and shelter, they had no need to be anxious. Moving at will in a land of freedom, the thought of personal insecurity was far from their minds. Their dream world was a world beautiful. Books and pictures, the songs of poets and the visions of prophets ravished their souls. On the other side of the wall of their dreams, they knew that men and women and even little children agonized in poverty, poverty of body, of heart, of character, of soul, and they delighted to picture a coming day when the disinherited should be rescued from the Egypt of their bondage and nakedness and, with songs of gladness, enter the fair land of promise. But, save in imagination, the sufferings across the great divide touched them not at all. The lines of their own lives having fallen in pleasant places, they were protected from the actual horror of those sufferings by their wall of dreams. In 1914, however, that wall was pierced and soon lay in ruins about them. To their dismay, they found that, without willing or wishing it, they had become partakers of real sorrow, and pain and peril. The State, hitherto a mere symbol, had transformed its potential energy into active power, and stripped them of the right to call anything, except their souls, their own. They learnt the unhappy truth that though some men were good and wise, mankind as a whole was neither as good nor as wise as they had comfortably imagined. They found that men whose lips had spoken tender and peaceable and humane words could now howl hatred, vengeance and blood; that men who had borne witness to liberty and conscience could now shriek with rage against those who made a valiant stand for those sacred things. Moreover, surprise amounting to shock froze their spirits as leader after leader announced to their shaken and shuddering souls that God the Father was dead, and that the universe was an expression of a great but blind Life Force, whose activity consisted in mighty attempts to do something and whose experiments had resulted in the tragedy of the world war. Small wonder that mere dreamers of dreams are nonplussed and naked and despairing. Even strong men have felt the scorching heat of the fiery trial through which all are passing, but since they are strong in faith and hope and love, they will stand the test and come forth pure gold. Here then is a message for the New Year. Brother, sister, do not surrender your ideals!

H.F.S.

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—AND—
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